

# AER GAINS Video Series - Assessment for Learning with Young Learners: Transcripts

## Segment 1: Using Assessment FOR Learning (7:51)

**Narrator:** Young children have the potential to be capable, independent learners. When educators meaningfully engage children in assessment that is seamlessly integrated with instruction, children know what they are learning, know what it looks like to learn, and begin to be able to set goals and monitor their progress towards attaining them. By designing learning contexts that provide children opportunities and support to reflect on their learning, educators help young children develop the foundational language, knowledge, and skills they need to take ownership of their learning.

Educators commonly use assessment to determine what students know and can do. This video shows educators using assessment with Kindergarten, Grade One, and Grade Two students in a distinctly different way, as a means to help students learn and to begin their journey toward becoming independent learners.

Assessment is the process of gathering information about learning. Both students and educators need to be skilled assessors, able to gather valid and reliable information about what is being learned and what to do next. When children are taught the knowledge and skills to assess their own progress and to make effective learning decisions, they are empowered to be independent learners.

*Text on screen: The role of the teacher is to help students develop their metacognitive awareness. This lies at the heart of effective and powerful teaching. Jones, 2007*

Educators support children's development of metacognition through their skillful use of two powerful tools: assessment and instruction. Assessment for the purpose of improving student learning is seen as both Assessment for Learning and Assessment as Learning. Educators use information to decide what actions to take to help students make progress in their learning, both when planning for learning and in their moment to moment interactions with children. With young learners, much of this information is gathered through careful observation and documentation. Educators can teach students to gather information about their own learning so they can decide what they need to do next to make progress. Just as students use inquiry to learn, these educators have been inquiring into this different approach to using assessment.

**T1:** I feel like I'm learning to speak a new language when I am interacting with the children. The nice part about it is, it's celebrating the learning of the child, so it feels good.

**T2:** It is a different way of teaching, but it engages my students every single day.

**T3:** The Assessment for Learning approach has made a huge impact on my teaching. It actually has changed the way I teach. Not only are students now taking ownership for their learning, but they are being able to report back findings.

**T4:** Over the course of this year, my assessment practices have changed quite dramatically.

**T5:** Now there is a much greater environment of co-learning in my classroom and the kids are co-learning. I am learning from them, they are learning from me.

**T6:** We have a lot of “ah-ha” moments.

**T7:** My role as a teacher has changed. I am a teacher who does not “teach”; I am a teacher who listens, I am a teacher who reflects, I am a teacher who responds. I have definitely changed the way I teach.

**T8:** You know the children better, and you know what the children need.

**T7:** Yes, better than ever in my teaching career.

**Narrator:** You will also see teachers and early childhood educators planning learning contexts that embed the practices of Assessment for Learning and Assessment as Learning. These highly researched practices aim to help children become increasingly more aware of their role in learning, with the eventual result of giving them ownership of their learning.

**T2:** Never have my students had more of a part in planning what we do in the classroom, have had more of a part being a part of that classroom, and never have they had such success as they have had this year on an ongoing and continual basis.

**Narrator:** In classrooms focused on helping students become aware of themselves as capable learners, educators embed specific practices into the teaching and learning.

*Text on screen: 1. Identifying, sharing, and clarifying learning goals*

**T9:** Bianca, we have been making some observations and some predictions about spring. What have you observed?

**S:** ...some baby birds.

*Text on screen: Learning Goal: We are learning about the world around us using inquiry.*

**T5:** I think we will start with the word “audience.” I am going to give you a couple of minutes to talk to your elbow partner about the word “audience” and what you think it means. Then we are going to come back as a class and discuss it, okay?

*Text on screen: Learning Goal: We are learning to plan our own writing by identifying the “who,” “what,” “how,” and “why,” of our writing.*

(Students discussing)

*Text on screen: 2. Developing students’ understanding of success criteria*

**T2:** Now that we have set our goal, let’s go look at our success criteria that we had when we did our retelling presentations. Here we have our success criteria. We decided that using expression in our voice was something that we thought was really important when we present. We created our “pic” symbol to go with it, and I see many of our friends are working on this as part of their goal.

*Text on screen: Learning Goal: We are learning to share information and ideas out loud.*

**T1:** So when Emma and you were building your towers, who’s tower was longer?

**S:** Mine.

**T1:** It was? How do you know that?

**S:** Because, Emma broke off a shorter piece.

**T1:** Now there’s a mathematical word, “shorter.” And yours was....

*Text on screen: Success Criteria: I can use mathematical language. I can compare different amounts.*

**S:** ...longer.

**T1:** Longer. There is another mathematical word!

**S:** This finger is the longest finger on my hand.

**T1:** Oh yeah, you’re right! So you were comparing those two fingers.

*Text on screen: 3. Providing descriptive feedback linked to success criteria*

**T4:** Sam, we are learning about inquiry and you did a great job of observing today.

*Text on screen: Success Criteria: I can notice and observe things.*

**S:** Oh thanks Mrs. (inaudible)

**T4:** You're welcome. You used your eyes when you were making your observation, you were thinking about what your observations were, and you were telling me about them.

**S:** Yes

*Text on screen: 4. Teaching the skills of peer and self-assessment*

*Text on screen: Success Criteria: Look at the audience. Use a prop.*

**S:** Aaron, I think next time you should look at the audience. You did a good job at using your prop.

*Text on screen: 5. Individual Goal Setting*

**T2:** Okay Clare, thank you very much. So when you take your star from over when we did our presentations last time, you can now place it on our new success criteria and you can decide what's that goal that you're going to work on. Okay? Excellent Clare, great job!

**Narrator:** As a result of these practices, children become consciously aware of their learning decisions to the point where they become strategic and reflective in their choices of where to focus their learning efforts.

*Text on screen: "Getting children to reflect on progress themselves, to climb the 'high ground' from which they can survey their own knowledge and process of learning ( Bruner 1986), might be said to be one of the most ambitious purposes for teacher assessment..." Torrance & Pryor, 1998*

**Narrator:** In the following video segments, you will have an opportunity to explore in greater depth how educators plan and implement these practices in early years and in primary classrooms.

*Text on screen: "Assessment involves more than the products and outcomes of learning; it concerns how children learn and make sense of their world." Buldu, 2010*

**Narrator:** A viewing guide has been developed to enhance your professional learning while viewing this video. The materials in this viewing guide are intended to help you assess your current practice, guide your professional learning, and monitor your learning over time as you continue to use this resource.